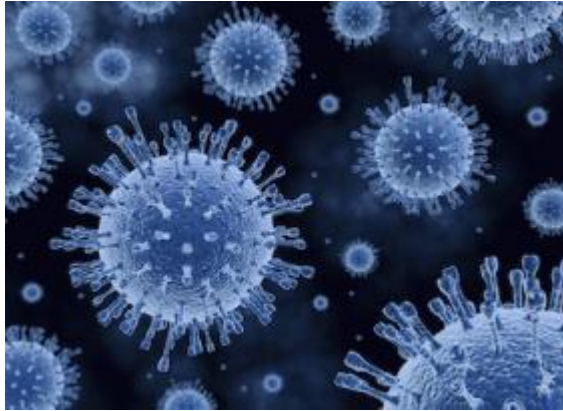# Viruses and Malware

Protection against computer viruses and other 'malware'

Symantec AntiVirus provides essential protection for your computer against virus infection and infiltration by spyware and other malicious software ("malware") through monitoring, scanning, and scheduled automated updates to definitions.

Free protection for all your computers at home and work

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What is malware?

Computer "viruses," "malware," and "spyware" are all malicious forms of software that can damage your system and data files, and also compromise the security and confidentiality of your computer work.

How computers become compromised with malware

- Malicious macros (automated actions or commands) within Office files like Word documents or Excel spreadsheets.
- Email attachments, even ones that seem to be from people you know.
- Web links within in email messages.
- "Hijacked" or malicious web pages.
- Browser pop-up windows that urge you to click on links.
- Flash drives or other removable media.
- File sharing using "P2P" (peer-to-peer) software.
- Instant Messaging software.
- Free and shared software like music players, and other little web utility programs.
- Software downloads from illegal pirated software sites.

Symptoms of a malware or spyware infection

- Your computer suddenly starts to behave strangely, requires frequent restarts, or begins showing pop-up ads that aren't related to the website you're visiting.
- Your browser settings have suddenly changed without your consent. Often malware changes the home page setting on your browser.
- Your web browser takes you to unfamiliar sites that you didn't choose to navigate to yourself.
- Pop-ups appear that are unrelated to the sites you normally visit.
- Additional browser toolbars appear at the top of your browser windows.
- Your computer seems unusually sluggish and unresponsive.
- Your firewall and antivirus programs are frequently turned off automatically.
- You are unable to stop the excessive pop-up windows that appears from nowhere.
- Applications appear on your machine that you did not install yourself.
- You get a lot of bounced back email and see evidence of emails being sent without your knowledge.
- Your system preferences are changed to settings you didn't select.

What do I do if I believe my computer is infected?

Contact the MHIS Help Desk at 860-757-9411 or mhis_helpdesk@hartfordschools.org